Solicitation Announcement

Request for Proposal No: S14-269

Procurement Type: Cost Reimbursement

Title: Cancer Research Projects in Computational Omics

Project Background and Objectives:

Leidos Biomedical, in working with the NCI National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the NVIDIA Foundation are working together to leverage computational efforts to provide tools for the mining and interpretation of large-scale publicly available 'omics datasets. Specifically, this will involve each organization soliciting proposals through existing efforts (Leidos Biomed, NCI, NVIDIA Foundation) to develop open source tools that leverage computation to enable analysis of large, publically available biomedical datasets. The goal is to dramatically impact the battle against cancer and reduce the time it takes for research outcomes to be used effectively in a clinical environment.

The objectives of this project are to provide tools that will enable the mining and interpretation of large-scale publicly available omics datasets. It is anticipated that the successful Offeror(s) will provide functional open source software, which integrates and visualizes complex multi-omic datasets.

"Compute the Cure" is a strategic philanthropic initiative of the NVIDIA Foundation that aims to advance the fight against cancer by supporting cancer researchers in their search for a cure. For more information about NVIDIA Foundation and Compute the Cure, see the NVIDIA website at *http://www.nvidia.com/object/compute-the-cure.html*. While the NCI's Clinical Proteomic Tumor Analysis Consortium (CPTAC) supports similar goals and objectives as Compute the Cure, the NCI is not providing support to NVIDIA Foundation for this initiative or endorsing the Foundation's activities.

Key Dates:

- RFP release date   August 27, 2014
- Questions Submission Deadline   September 10, 2014
- Proposal Submission Deadline   October 8, 2014

Contact Details:

For a copy of the Solicitation and Draft Leidos Agreement please contact:

Matt DeSantis at *Matt.Desantis@fnlcr.nih.gov*

The solicitation referenced is issued by Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc. (Leidos Biomed), a wholly owned subsidiary of Leidos Corporation under its prime contract with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) at Frederick. Leidos Biomed is the Operations and Technical Support Contractor for the operation of the Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research (FNLCR) under contract from the National Cancer Institute (NCI). Leidos Biomed is responsible for managing the scientific and administrative aspects of the FNLCR's research endeavors.

AMENDMENT OF SOLICITATION

SOLICITATION/RFP NUMBER	AMENDMENT NUMBER	EFFECTIVE DATE	PAGE
S14-269	01	Date of Leidos Biomedical Research Signature	1 of 5

OFFEROR NAME AND ADDRESS:	ISSUED BY:
	Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc. Subcontracts Department P.O. Box B Frederick, MD 21702-1201

☒ The above numbered solicitation is amended as set forth below. The hour and date specified for receipt of offers ☐ is extended, ☒ is not extended.

DESCRIPTION OF AMENDMENT:

The purpose of this amendment is to incorporate questions received with associated responses in reference to Solicitation No. S14-269 – Cancer Research Projects in Computational Omics. See pages 2 of 5 for details.

** ALL OTHER TERMS & CONDITIONS REMAIN UNCHANGED AND IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT **

For Offeror:		For Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc.: On File and Signature Available Upon Request	
Name	Date Signed:	Name	Date Signed:
Title		Title	

Questions and Responses

1. Is there an anticipated/preferred start date for this project?

    The proposal should provide a project plan that includes a start date soon after the award of the subcontract. Therefore, the subcontractor would need to be prepared to commence work based upon a proposed project plan soon after the date of subcontract execution. Award(s) are anticipated late November/early December, 2014.

2. Please verify the budget template that is needed for this proposal.

    Please see "Attachment 3: Cost (or Price) Proposal Information Requirements" of the document titled "RFP S14-269." This section begins on Page 23 of the RFP S14-269 document, with the budget template itself on page 25.

3. Please confirm that the NIH salary cap of $181,500 should be used.

    This subcontract is subject to the current NIH salary cap. Therefore, the current salary rate limitation should be utilized for proposed personnel whose salaries are at or over the current salary cap.

4. Should the costs listed in the budget reflect total costs (which would include F&A) or direct costs only?

    Total costs (inclusive of indirect costs) should be listed.

5. Are "for-profit" entities eligible to submit proposals for this effort?

    Yes, for-profit companies are welcome to submit proposals.

6. Could you clarify if this is a limited competition or open competition?

    This acquisition is an open competition.

7. Can our institute apply for BOTH the NVIDIA Foundation's application as well as the NCI/LBR solicitation?

    Yes, your institution may apply for both efforts. However, the NVIDIA Foundation application review process is separate and distinct from the Frederick National Laboratory effort.

8. Can we submit a revised proposal based on what we submitted in the past?

    This is the first solicitation issued for the objectives referenced within. It is unclear what proposal is being referred to for this acquisition.

9. Will this RFP allow for joint application, which would result in a lower tier subcontractor for Leidos Biomed? What would the lower tier subcontractor need to provide?

   Yes, a subcontractor's proposal may certainly include lower tier subcontract costs. It is expected that at a minimum, any proposal that includes lower-tier subcontract costs would include a detailed budget, CVs for Key Personnel, and Attachment 4, "Certificate of Accounting and Billing System Adequacy" be submitted for both the subcontractor and any lower-tiers. Please keep in mind that the management and administration of the lower tier subcontractor would be the responsibility of the subcontractor for any proposal submitted.

10. Are international entities eligible to submit a proposal?

    Yes

11. How should the CVs look like? Should they be in the standard NIH format?

    There is no prescribed format; standard NIH format is acceptable.

12. What is needed in the description for personnel on top of the CVs?

    Summaries of the expertise and the proposed role on the project are required for Key Personnel as requested in section "C.3 Personnel" of the RFP. Section "C.2 Organization and/or Team" should address the roles of all personnel who will be supporting this effort.

13. Although the technical part of the proposal has a limit of 10 pages, the executive summary is upper bounded by 5 pages. So we assume it will have to include more than the summary of the technical part? What else is expected in the summary?

    The Executive Summary includes 6 distinct questions that need to be addressed, with a preceding statement as follows: "The summary shall contain the most important elements from sections below but should at a minimum clearly specify the following elements"

14. What should we have in the management plan, especially since we only have two PIs in the same institution and a number of postdocs?

    It is assumed that this is referring to section "F.3 Subcontractor Management." If no lower tier subcontractors are being proposed, the response should simply state as such.

15. Does the 700K upper bound for the total budget include indirect costs? Are the indirect costs similar to the NIH rate?

    Per question 4, <u>the total costs for the proposed project</u> should be included. A copy of your HHS or similar negotiated rate agreement is required to be submitted with your proposal. Offerors are reminded that up to three (3) subcontracts will be awarded for a total of $1.8 million in response to this solicitation. Offerors should budget the resources that are necessary to fully perform the scope of work as proposed.

16. Should a specific format and spacing be utilized?

    No less than 11 pt font should be utilized. Single spacing for the proposal is acceptable.

17. What is the expected length of the monthly reports? Will they just be a paragraph or two or will they be much more detailed?

    The anticipated monthly status reports need to satisfactorily address the sections within "J.1 Monthly Status Report" of the Draft Agreement document. Reports will be reviewed and revisions may be requested as appropriate in order to facilitate payment of invoices.

18. Please provide more clarification on what is needed of the Risk Management Plan.

    Please note that while Offerors are providing a proposal to a Statement of Objectives, the resultant agreement will have an actual Statement of Work, with a potential schedule of deliverables or milestones to be met. As such, there may be delays in progress, personnel turnover, cost overruns, or any other number of issues which may impact progress on the effort. Section F.2 is requesting your organization's approach, specifically for this effort, on how to mitigate any risks associated with the resulting award.

19. The Small Business plan link in Section M.1 is not working.

    Please use the following link: http://www.hhs.gov/asfr/ogapa/osbdu/small-business/subcontractplan.html

20. Is this RFP being directed specifically to me for the types of work we are doing? Is there a critical gap that CPTAC needs now that matches our expertise or is this is a broad solicitation?

    The RFP issued is a broad based solicitation with open competition. No organization has been predetermined to meet any specific requirements. It was distributed widely as well as to a master list of organizations who frequently respond to solicitations supporting the CPTAC and who have the capabilities to carry out the requested requirements of this effort.

21. We understand that this is primarily an opportunity for computational research, but is data generation (e.g., preparation of biomaterials and interrogation using genome-scale assays) permitted when it is relevant for the computational endpoints?

In most cases, such wet-lab experiments would be considered beyond the scope of this solicitation and is not the primary objective of this solicitation. If however, the proposed experiment is integral and essential to the overall objectives of this computational research effort, the source evaluation group may take this into consideration when evaluating the proposal. Proposals should clearly indicate the extent to which data generation is being proposed and the linkage between such data generation and the computational objectives.

22. For biological discovery enabled/generated by our proposed tools, is experimental validation required?

    No, experimental validation of biological discovery is beyond the scope of this solicitation.

23. How much emphasis should be placed on the underlying biological question?

    Page 6 of the RFP states one of the evaluation criteria for the technical approach is "Focus and Impact: [The] project leverages computation to solve a specific problem in omics, and will have a substantial impact in the battle against cancer. (Omics informally refers to a field of study in biology ending in –omics, such as genomics, proteomics, or metabolomics. The integration of datasets generated from a combination of omics technologies aims to provide a deeper understanding of the overall complexity of cancer biology, with applications to human health and disease.)

24. If the biological discovery was derived from both public and local data, are we required to release the local data?

    Page 13 of the RFP states, "Projects … may also utilize other publicly accessible omic datasets (emphasis mine)." That is, all data used for this project is required to be publicly accessible.

25. Are there any recommended pipelines (e.g., NIST Proteomics pipeline) that should be adopted?

    The CPTAC data have been processed through the CPTAC common data analysis pipeline, and the peptide-spectral matches of these data are available at the CPTAC Data Coordinating Center. Repeating this level of analysis in a proposal would likely be evaluated as low on innovation. This solicitation seeks proposals that move beyond peptide identification and quantification.

26. What long term support is required for developed applications?

    No long term support is necessary for any resultant award.